ROSS ROADS

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THE JOURNAL OF THE RURAL WORKERS' FELLOWSHIP
OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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ROGATION 1955

THREE SLENDER THINGS THAT BEST SUPPORT THE WORLD:
THE SLENDER STREAM OF MILK FROM THE COW'S DUG IN THE PAIL;
THE SLENDER BLADE OF GREEN CORN UPON THE GROUND;
THE SLENDER THREAD OVER THE HAND OF A SKILLED WOMAN.

THREE SOUNDS OF INCREASE:
THE LOWING OF A COW IN MILK;
THE DIN OF A SMITHY;
THE SWISH OF A PLOUGH.

. . . *The Triads of Ireland*
(9th Century)

THE RURAL WORKERS' FELLOWSHIP OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, INC.

(Incorporated under the laws of the State of New York)

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ROGATIONTIDE

God's miracles of sun and rain
Have brought the springing corn again;
With cross and choir we go to bless
The fields in all their loveliness.

President's Message

WITH Lent and Easter over, we R.W.F. members can now turn our thoughts towards Rogation Sunday — or Rural Life Sunday, as me of our brethren in other denominations call it. Because of our in-rest in the activities of the countryside, shouldn't we be especially ncerned to have our Churches fittingly observe this great rural Church ly day, and perhaps to take an active part in promoting community servances? I hope all our members will use, and will help others use, the abundant resources of our Church to prepare for this special casion.

I've been thinking that Rogation Sunday should somehow be the focal int of the year for our Fellowship. I've not come up with any bright ea as to how to make it so, except to suggest that we could all re-ember the R.W.F. as a special intention in our prayers on that Sunday. ur priest-members could announce your intention to your congregations; d our lay-members could ask your priest if he will do it for you. nce, to my knowledge, there is no special prayer for the R.W.F. on is occasion, I am submitting the following as a possibility for use Rogation Sunday:

> "O Lord of field and flock, of forest and mine, whose children worship and serve thee as well from the small town and country churches as from the great cathedrals across our land; we humbly beseech thee to behold and bless the members and activities of the Rural Workers' Fellowship of the Episcopal Church. As our common interest binds us together may we be ever mindful of thy loving presence among us, and as we concern ourselves with a ministry to the isolated and scattered, wilt thou give us a sense of our oneness with thee and thy whole Church. All this we ask in the name of that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thy son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Surely the bonds of fellowship will be strengthened and our work ll be blessed as we all participate in this simple, yet profound means uniting our scattered membership in one single task. If you use this, or ther prayer for R.W.F. in your Church of Rogation Sunday, May 15,

1955, will you drop me a postal card, stating that you did, and descri the circumstances under which it was used? Be sure to give your nam and address on the card! Perhaps the August *CROSSROADS* can carr a list of the replies received. May God Bless and prosper this corporat act of the R.W.F.

Faithfully yours,
William Davidson

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—oOo—

Walter Winchell reported that Wm. Randolph Hearst once urged h famous columnist, Arthur Brisbane, to take a six-month holiday. In r jecting the generous offer, Brisbane wrote his chief: "There are two reaso why I will not accept an extended vacation. The first reason is that if I qu writing my column six months, it might affect the circulation of your new papers. The second reason is that it might not."

THE LITTLE TOWNS

By DOROTHY THOMPSON

ALTHOUGH of late years, and for time-saving purposes, I have traveled inside and outside America almost entirely by plane, I love trains. The ew ones, particularly west of Chicago, are luxurious with lounges, ex- llent dining cars, comfortable bedrooms, radios, television sets and the test magazines.

I appreciate these increased comforts, but they are not why I love trains. love them because one can look out the window and see the country roll ast, slowly enough for one's eye to take in many details. From a plane the ndscape appears only as an abstract pattern, of geometrically outlined elds and forests, ribbons of roads, clusters of houses, which must be llages, and the lines, lights, squares and towers of great town and cities.

This fall and winter a speaking tour took me out to the Middle West— hio, Kansas, Minnesota — and to places not easily accessible by air, so went on trains, fuming, as I started, that so much "time would be lost." d then wondering whimsically what becomes of lost time—wondering what limbo it is consigned and what it does with itself when it gets ere—and recalling the words of that delightful poet, William Henry avies:

A poor life this is, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

So I sat and stared, well rewarded, as the colored counties passed my ndow, noting with satisfaction the many terraced and contoured fields, own with the stubble of harvested wheat and corn, or emerald with routings of winter rye; noting the reflections of the last leaves and of cing clouds in little ponds, designed to hold precious water; admiring the at white houses, their doorways usually shaded by twin trees, and around em big barns and silos, painted 'Indian' red, or sometimes built of flashing uminum, within neatly fenced barnyards.

But most of all I loved looking at the little towns as we went through. ne doesn't see the best aspects of a town from the railroad yards, but as e train pulled in or out, slowing down even if it did not stop, one always d a vista of streets—of 'Main Street' where the shops and stores and gest buildings always are, and of the streets where people live. And, oking down those streets, neatly paved, shaded by great maples or arching ms, their homes set back among raked lawns and clumps of shrubbery, thought, as I have thought time and again, that nobody knows *anything* out America who does not know its little towns.

We have few great cities that for beauty, grade, architecture or comely anning compare favorably with Paris, Rome, Florence, Vienna, Ma-

printed by permission from the Feb., 1955, Ladies Home Journal, this article by one of the ation's leading columnists shows that town-and-country is deep in the blood of all. Copyright 955 by The Curtis Publishing Company.

drid, Amsterdam, Stockholm, Brussels, or even Berlin, handsome if n lovely before it came crashing down, or with foggy, imperial Londo The European landing on our shores finds New York splendid, breat taking, monumental, exciting, but, with its apparently insoluble tran port problem, noisy and anything but comfortable, and quite incredib dirty. How could a city be otherwise which is inhabited by eight milli people, where (in Manhattan, at least) there are no alleys, and garba must be collected at front entrances, and streets cleaned between rows parked cars?

Washington is a handsome city but a cold one, a "company tow devoted only to Government, extraordinarily lacking in metropolit amenities, even to numbers of first-rate restaurants, and containing immediate juxtaposition to the finest residential areas many slums.

Chicago, perennially ill-governed, handsome in parts, vital and exc ing always, can challenge all contenders with the extent of its co stantly encroaching slums.

America, I think, is worst represented in its great cities, and the are what the foreigner usually sees — noting the dirt, the noise, t slums jostling the boulevards. For comeliness, coziness, few, if any, countr can match the American small town — from New England to Californ from the Gulf of Mexico to the Canadian border — taking them *as a whol*

There are exquisite English, French and Italian villages to wh the tourist is directed by Baedeker. But there are also thousands t are unspeakably dreary, with streets of dark, uncomfortable homes wall to wall flush with the sidewalk, without lawns and, except for pub parks, hardly a tree. Life, too, in theme is provincial and inbred an extent that it no longer is in the American small town. "Gop Prairie" is not "the climax of civilization", as it was not when Sincl Lewis so dubbed it with ironic scorn in his introduction to Main Str But Carol Kennicott, whose frustrated discontent is the subject of famous novel, would find much more stimulating and sophistication to in Gopher Prairie than she did less than a generation ago.

In the Middle West, the architecture seldom has the grace and propo tion observable in New England, Virginia and the early-settled sta where Georgian influences still predominate. The Middle West gr up when wood fretted gables, towers and portecocheres made a 'mansio when verandas were thrown out in all directions, and the *ne plus ul* was a window of quite hideously gaudy red-blue-and-green glass the stairs; the age of golden oak, black walnut, Brussels carpets, l curtains, what-nots, center tables and bead curtains. Many of th houses are left, as I saw from the train, passing through Ohio a Kansas, and one of the finest collections of them I have ever se is in Van Wert, Ohio, population 14,000, where I stopped to spe There, too, the old Marsh mansion, now hostess house for a school f maladjusted children, is probably the best extant museum of the perio

I confess that these houses delight me. I remember them from m childhood in up-state New York, as the homes of my father's wealthi parishioners or friends. Whatever they lacked of grace, they did n

lack space and stability. They were built for big families, in which every member had a room of his own which was not a cubicle. They had parlors for the grownups and guests, sitting rooms where the children played in blizzardy weather, big dining rooms which were often the family sitting room — and how many problems in compound fractions, or 'essays' on geography, have I not done under the hanging lamp over the dining-room table! They had attics full of trunks, storing two or three generations of old clothes to dress up in. If it rained, one could ride a tricycle on the wide verandas. And they also had 'hired girls', and even occasionally, uniformed maids. And perhaps I like them now as an amusing break in too-standardized "good taste".

But looking down the streets of the little towns, I saw that the newer homes are small and "laborsaving" — for the hired girl has vanished — but still with much more space, outside and in, than any but the rich can afford in big cities. Some are the ranch type, low, wide and wide-windowed, but most are two-storied, or a story and a half with dormers and usually with front porches, on which often stand bicycles or tricycles. One could trace the growth of the family by looking at the houses, the ell that had obviously been added, the dormer that plainly had not originated with the house. Some of the owners, I saw in passing, had in an outbreak of rugged individualism defied the prevailing white or white and green, and painted their little houses — whatever the architecture — pink, or robin's-egg blue, or gray with blue shutters, and they sang to me. And always the lawns, with never a high hedge or fence against a neighbor, and always the noble American trees.

I wished I could be taking some important Russian — incognito, in a false mustache — along with me, to show him what *community,* as contrasted with communism, can be; to show him the wonderful friendliness of small-town America where nobody is an anonymous cipher.

And also to show him what "progress" or "advance" manifests itself in the little towns that metropolitan Americans still call "the sticks". Despite the continued growth of our great cities, and apart from the millions of Americans living on farms, nearly 42,000,000 of our people live in "the sticks", in towns of cities of under 50,000.

How does today's Main Street differ from the one described in Sinclair Lewis's famous novel of 1920?

Like Sinclair Lewis, I was born and brought up in little towns of the period he described, and I never could quite agree with the picture he presented. But even that ironic satirist would change it, were he to write today. As a speaker, I have, of late years, visited every state in the Union but one, and spoken in hundreds of small towns — invited by a Chamber of Commerce, a women's club, a local college, a public forum or some other civic group, and not to entertain an audience but to speak very seriously about American problems, foreign and domestic. This, in itself, indicates a change — a shift to a far-wider range of interest. I have spoken in towns of 5000 and upward, always rejoicing

when my schedule gave me a free day in which to meet people an look around. And if there are any small towns without *proportionatel* as many civilized, informed, public-spirited and wide-awake people a there in the great cities, I haven't been in them. Their local civil con sciousness, I think, is higher than that of the big-city populations. I the great cities people vote for reforms. In the little towns, they *undertak* the reforms. And the old provincial tightness is disappearing.

Almost all Americans, whatever their so-called 'social station', trave today to surrounding big cities, and often from one end of the countr to another. Hundreds of thousands have been abroad. A physician i a village of 2000 whom I had to consult about my throat wished to di cuss China. He was born in China, when his father was a missionar there; had lived there to the age of fourteen, speaks several Chines dialects, and returned eventually as a mmber of U. S. Intelligence. Whil he swabbed out my throat he told me more about China — very precisel chapter and verse — than I could learn from much reading.

"Why did you decide to settle here?"

"I like it — several of us are starting a little clinic —it's needed – nice place to live — nice people."

A garage owner told me about spending last summer in Italy. An so it goes.

People in the small towns read. "What do you think of Dewhurst article on the Russians in the October 29th issue of U. S. News an World Report?" a Kansas rancher asked. I had missed the article i my travels. He outlined the contents and I promised to look it u when I got back, recommending in turn the book of the Englishma Edward Crankshaw, Cracks in the Kremlin Wall. He made a note o it, after which we talked about soil conservation, of which he is a maste and an enthusiast.

I ran into friends of friends. Miss Mary Bowman, who has a qui fabulous china and gift shop in Salem, Ohio, and knows all about Au trian and Swiss toys, Bohemian glass, and the merits and demerits o English, German, American, French and Italian porcelain and ceramic inquired about her friends Ann Batchelder and Lisa Sergio, who a my neighbors in Vermont.

The spontaneous kindness of small-town people to the visitor, the war way they take one into their homes and hearts, their interest in an curiosity about places they have not seen, or topics they confess the 'haven't given much thought to', are surely unique to this country. am ever reminded of Walt Whitman's tribute to America:

"Here is the hospitaliy which forever indicates heroes."

The interest of small-town folks in the national and international scen is, of course, much more Platonic than their interest in their own sta and community. How, or why, should it be otherwise? The world too big for many of us to love. Even America is too big really to *lo* except as an abstration. American patriotism, I have come to think, is th accumulation of thousands of little patriotisms. The Vermonter, th Kansas, the Virginian, the Ohioan — I choose at random — still seen

o believe as he did in Lewis' time that all America revolves around his tate, the state around his town, and that his is the best state and the est town in the nation. But the new value of his attitude is that he ries his best to make it so! It is not just vainglory.

"Main Street", the commercial part of the small towns, is, indeed, greatly standardized throughout the country. One sees the same super-markets, dime-to-dollar and drug stores, many of them chains. The con-ents of the stores and shops (and also their prices) are pretty uni-orm. The "brand" has taken over.

But the small-towner is eagerly prideful of what sets his town *apart* — and he is proudest, I have found, of its social and civic achievements.

Nearly every town I visit has something that is the 'biggest' in America or the world) and its citizens will tell you so, usually with a grin nd the preface of "believe it or not." Van Wert has its cheese factory, the largest in the world", unique in that it alone produces the famous Liederkranz", America's only original contribution to the soft fermented heeses favored by gourmets. I was enchanted to learn that the Swiss mmigrant who created it did so by sheer chance, that all the cheese factory's aboratory technicians have never been able to isolate the bacteria which nake it in twenty-four days of curing; that the coy bacteria reside in ne wooden racks and bamboo mats where the cheese is ripened; that ne management therefore (apologetically) can't use stainless steel; and nat every ounce of the process of making it has to be performed by and. (It enchants me, along with the cheese, because I like to think nat a few good things defy the chemists.)

In Pratt, Kansas, population 8000, one is quickly told that here are ne greatest fresh-water-fish hatcheries (started by an ingenious nature over originally, but now operated by the state) in America or the world, long with the finest museum of Kansas wildlife. (It's a honey.) And ratt is also the largest manufacturer of fly swatters!

But having disposed of the "biggest and best", citizens want to show r tell you of the projects created by the community: the new schools, ne hospital, the clinics, the amateur symphony orchestra, the little theater, ne beautiful churches, the public forum, the public swimming pool, the ovely park and recreation grounds, the youth clubs. Mr. Babbitt is ill boosting, but he's a different Babbitt boosting different things. And hile he shows you around he wants to discuss the course of American ducation and how to deal with juvenile delinquency. "We have not ad a single case of juvenile crime in this community in four years," citizen told me. "We used to have some. But we put our minds n it, and I think we've done a pretty good job. We think our kids e about as happy and good as you'll find anywhere."

Who does all these things in the little towns — things that are trans-rming them?

As far as I can learn, nearly everybody. Once the most "important" eople in the community were the ones with the most money, even they were mean as old Scrooge. Now a well-to-do man who is not

also public-spirited goes without acclaim. So, of course, he becomes public-spirited even if not naturally gifted, one might say, in that direction. Not only because it's good business but because every human being wants to be admired, and if possible loved, by his fellow man.

You can't be loved in America's little towns if you set yourself above others. Very rich people live in little towns, but they don't have butlers. Even if they could get them, it wouldn't be 'in style'. It is in style to entertain informally — and casserole cooking is becoming an art. It is in style for the mistress of a very beautiful and obviously expensive home to bring the roast beef out of her stainless-steel kitchen, where she has cooked it herself, for her husband to carve and pass around, and for her guests to help stack the dishwasher afterward. Carol Kennicott's prediction that dishes would one day be washed by machinery has been realized. Nor could she today, with the same accuracy, criticize the lack of social consciousness.

It is in style for a busy young banker to coach a kids' football team. It is in style for the son of a pioneer whose father amassed a fortune in the nineties to turn his great inherited house into a recreation center. It's in style to care about others.

Industries are moving to the small towns, and they are different, too, from what they were twenty-five years ago. No longer are they eyesores. They, too, stand amid lawns and shrubbery. They aren't belching smoke to blacken the countryside, and often they look more like private school than like factories.

Small-town folk are far more sophisticated, cultivated and knowledgeable than were Carol Kennicott's neighbors, partly because everybody has more money, because travel has been democratized, and because radio and television bring the affairs of the world into every living room. Small towners are as familiar with the faces of Broadway actors as are New Yorkers. The "elocutionists" they go to the nearest big town to hear are Charles Laughton, Raymond Massey, Judith Anderson and the others who have made a new dramatic art of reading. They travel sixty miles to listen to a symphony concert and return the same night. They follow the panel discussions on television — and participate in them afterward.

"Just the same, the most talented small-towners head for the cities," a small-towner himself reminded me.

This is true and it is natural. The greatly gifted are usually restless and want to test and match their talents in a larger room. But small towns (and smaller cities) have nevertheless produced almost all our leading native-born writers and other artists. Of America's five winners of the Nobel prize for literature, Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill, Pearl Buck, William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway, all but O'Neill came originally from small towns, though Pearl Buck was brought up as a missionary's child in China. Lewis, a perpetual wanderer, lived in many parts of the United States and died near Rome, but his work was always centered in "Gopher Prairie" and "Zenith". And he willed that his ashes should be interred in Sauk Centre. Faulkner has never

moved, except temporarily, farther from his birthplace, New Albany, in Mississippi, than to Oxford, in the same state.

American writers of established international reputation have come almost without exception from small towns or small cities — Carl Sandburg, Willa Cather, John Steinbeck, Thomas Wolfe, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Maxwell Anderson, Erskine Caldwell, Tennessee Williams. Even the highly sophisticated Scott Fitzgerald, for whom there is a new vogue, was born and brought up not in a great metropolis but in St. Paul, Minnesota.

It has recently been said (by Professor Lewis Atherton) that it is hard to find philosophical interests anywhere in the Middle West. It is hard to find them in small towns. But it is certainly just as hard, proportionately, to find them anywhere else. Our century is not devoted to philosophy but to technology. The latter is not quite so overwhelming in the smaller places.

Carol Kennicott, who revolted against Main Street and her private town, was no genius and no philosopher. Essentially she was a yearner, just a little brighter, more literate, more romantic and more aspiring — to just what, she never knew — than her neighbors; more bored than profoundly rebellious. And eventually, you may remember, she went back home. Now, thirty-five years later, we hazard the guess that she never would have left. There is too much going on.

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Laurence Sterne wrote: "The brave only know how to forgive—it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at. Cowards have done good and kind actions; cowards have even fought, nay, sometimes conquered; but a coward never forgave—it is not in his nature; the power of doing it flows only from a strength and greatness of soul conscious of its own force and security, and above all the little temptations of resenting every fruitless attempt to interrupt its happiness."

Christ and the Countryside:

Part II

By H. A. L. Jefferson

WE COME now to the second reverence which is necessary for a genuine revival of our countryside, namely, a reverence for the nature and dignity of agricultural work. If there is a true reverence for the soil, then it follows that this must be reflected in the sense of worth and value to be found in the task of cultivation. The degradation produced by modern materialism, and the merely secular ends which are in general pursued by society, has not only debased our regard for the soil, but has robbed human labour, on the whole, of any sense of satisfaction and worth. It is significant here to recall the original meaning of the folk songs and shanties which only survive now as interesting relics of the past. We should remember that most of them were labour songs, which were sung and chanted in the performance of labour. Their lilt and rhythm were definitely linked with the movements and processes involved in the tasks performed. The ploughman, the miller, the blacksmith, and others had their particular songs, just as the sea shanties had a rhythm based on the muscular movements employed by the sailors in carrying on their work. It is noteworthy that there was a real sense of rhythm in work, a link between music and labour. The significance of such facts is not to be overlooked. The era of decay and depression which followed these earlier periods silenced the song on the lips, and stole the music from the hearts of men. Let it be frankly admitted that here we touch one of the tragic failures in the history of the Church. It could, and should, have done much more to protect the peasant, and to preserve his labour from the unhappy lot into which it fell. Speaking of this point in history Mr. Middleton Murry has well said (The Price of Leadership—p. 98):

> "It is computed that one-third of the land of Europe came into the hands of the Church, and such unearthly power to defend its possessions as no ruler ever possessed. It had but to be worthy of that power to retain them for ever . . . . The Church betrayed the simple man. It battened on the village community; instead of protecting, it helped to destroy it. Not content with lands its gathered benefices; took the villager's tithe and starved the parson; chastised with scorpions where the lay-lord chastised with whips, until it mattered not to the simple man who held the vast possessions of the Church."

These are strong words, but not too strong. The story of the English farm worker, as told in "The Village Labourer" by Mr. and Mrs Hammond, is abundant proof. In evidence, too, we may recall the writings of a great Englishman, William Cobbett, and the rural sketches of Richard Jefferies. Small wonder that the earlier robust zest faded

out of the life of the villager as his work became more and more subject to neglect and depression, while he subsisted, with his family, on a scanty wage, and not seldom in deplorable and insanitary cottages. It was not surprising that in increasing numbers the younger people migrated to the towns, the total of workers on the soil and the area in cultivation steadily dimished. The rapid development of machine power, through the Industrial Revolution, and the amazing expansion of factory life, in the international conditions of the nineteenth century made Britain the "workshop of the world" indeed, but, as we now know, our countryside paid a sad price for this monstrous dislocation of a balanced national economy.

But we are not concerned here with the economic effects of all this, so much as with its spiritual consequences, as they robbed the land worker of the sense of worth and satisfaction in his toil. Here, again, the "Five Standards" for an acceptable social order, to which reference has been made above, affirm in the fourth of these standards that:

> "The sense of a Divine vocation must be restored to man's daily work."

The implications of this claims are nothing short of revolutionary, but the claim reflects the New Testament view of human labour which is meant to be a divine calling, or vocation (I Cor. 7:24), and to be performed with goodwill as service unto God and not unto men (Eph. 6:7). If the Pauline thought is startling, it is an indication of the gulf that yawns between our conventional and too easily accepted ideas of work and worship. Our outlook has become so warped and deformed by the current belief that the meaning and motive of work is personal gain and advantage, that the inherent selfishness of such a view has blotted out any perception of worship as having relevance to work, or vice versa. Even worse, this perverted view of work and its meaning has not only separated it from worship, but even from common social morality. It is evidence of this that in a time of emergency, and abnormal circumstances, such as war, we find it necessary to impose immediately controls and restrictions to check the profiteering and exploitation of public need which otherwise would be rampant. This lack of an adequate economic morality has led to the desecration of our daily work, as one of its unhappy consequences, for here, also, the truth already affirmed holds good — what is not consecrated is desecrated. The inspiring of reverence in the heart of the worker for his task is a purpose to which priest and people should devote themselves in every parish in the country. All this is being written here applies to the town artisan as well as to the rural worker, but as the latter works so close to the soil, it should be easier for him to recover a sense of the divine vocation latent in his task. He is, indeed, a worked together with God, and the urgent responsibility resting on the Church is to help him to realize this fact deeply and sincerely.

But if such teaching is to carry conviction, and to be free of any taint of cant and unreality, we must recognize one or two things which it demands. For one thing it demands that work shall be worthy and

satisfying in itself. In the first place, good work must be its own end The fact that it is thorough and well done should make it an offering to God, an expression of true worship. There is something meagre and defective in our idea of worship if we cannot include this fact within it.

Such a view of our daily work is plainly implicit in the teaching of St Paul, expressed in the Ephesian letter, is which reference has been made above. First and foremost the work must be worth doing, and worthy doing well. The village blacksmith of our popular song could find true satisfaction and contentment in "something attempted, something done" and an essential part of his creed should be that his faith is first and foremost expressed in his labour.

In the second place, it is imperative that the economic conditions of the land worker must be consistent with a full, healthy and contented life. Wage rates must be adequate for the care and maintenance of a family, and cottages should be well built and well equipped. If agriculture is to be restored to its rightful place in the national life it must not lag behind urban industries in the economic advantages it provides. There must no longer be the urge and inducement for young people to forsake the work of the country for the labour of the towns. Substantial improvement in wages has been achieved under the stress of war conditions, though they have not yet reached a standard which will safeguard the countryman from the lure of the towns, and the provision of cottages is an urgent and serious need. The village school and its teachers should be regarded as a vital factor in the life of the community, and secondary education designed to foster and encourage a taste and aptitude for rural life and work. The country church, by the teaching and leadership of the priest, and by the zealous concern of all its members, can do much to see that conditions are steadily improved, and made in every way worthy of the importance of agricultural work. Those who enjoy the privilege of worshipping in our parish should regard it as an essential responsibility to be vigilant and watchful, and to press upon local authorities, and the government, through their elected representatives the necessity of ensuring proper social conditions for those who provide the true wealth of the community. This is particularly important when the parochial area is either so dominated in the interest of a few, or so far divided into small holdings, that the sense of faith or fellowship seems likely to have but little chance of finding combined expression.

The farmer and responsible landlord, no less than the labourer, have been victims of the neglect and perversion of our agriculture, which has been such a deplorable feature of modern economic life in Great Britain. More than one brave man, concerned to cultivate his acres, has put up a hopeless fight against the overwhelming odds set up by an obsolete and perverse financial system. The burden of mortgage and interest payments, and the lack of price stability allied to crushing taxation, have made it little short of a marvel that farming has been done so well as it has been. If we plead for the recovery of a genuine reverence for the soil, and for the labour concerned with its cultivation, then we

must see to it that there is such a drastic revision in finance and economic conditions, that there can be restored to the land and its workers a true sense of dignity and worth.

The third reverence is also essential if there is to be a genuine recovery of our rural life, namely, a reverence for human fellowship, which would make clear and vivid that our labour is designed to satisfy human need. In relation to the countryside this realisation of human fellowship will find several forms of expressions. One of the most important is to bridge the gulf which now exisit between the interests and outlook of the countryman and those of the townsman. There has been a growing divergence which is a calamity. It has been due to the rapid and immense growth of city life, caused by the conditions set in motion by the Industrial Revolution, and it has led not only to the deplorable overcrowding of our great city areas, but to a cleavage in human fellowship between town and country. To the average town dweller the country has become in the first place a store from which to draw a plentiful and cheap food supply, the cheaper the better. The cheapness in our food supply was demanded and encouraged by the prevalent lowness of wage rates, and it led to the utter disregard of the city worker as to the source of his food supply, and an easy acceptance of inferior quality. In one East London parish, in recent years, many children were found who thought the morning bottle of milk had been produced in some local factory, and Dr. Cyril Burt has reminded us of the very large percentage of school children in London who have never seen the countryside, and this is typical of our other great cities. The facts derived from war-time evacuation from the big city areas is eloquent proof, if proof is still needed, of the complete alientation of masses of our people from the life of the country, and the disastrous physical and spiritual results which accrue from this separation.

An opportunity to modify the results of this evil has been given by this large-scale evacuation of children from the city areas, due to war conditions. Large numbers have returned and it may be that not many will remain permanently settled in the country. But the experience will have a deep influence on very many of them, and may well play play an influential part in promoting the fuller return to a rural life which will be one of the great needs of the future.

Another unfortunate result of the wide separation between town and country is the temptation it offers to the candidate for Parliament in urban areas to make facile promises, for the alleged benefit of the townsman, which could only be implemented at the expense of the rural worker, while the city artisan has grown to feel that any large plans of rural improvement must be at his expense, and is prone to fear and resist them as a consequence. The remedy for this state of affairs will not be rapid or easy, and will call for patience and foresight, but it must be taken in hand, and it claims the active support and sympathy of the Church, for not only does the existing division between town and country confuse and misdirect our economic purpose, but it reveals a broken fellowship within the nation which must be healed.

So far the experience of the war may be turned to good account if it serves to remind the urban community of the splendid service rendered to them by British agriculture in a time of grave emergency. When we reflect on conditions as they were in 1939 and what British farming has achieved since that date, our debt to the countryman cannot easily be measured. We should not allow this fact to be forgotten, and it should prove a new link of sympathy and understanding.

It is to be hoped that in the years following the war there will be a gradual redistribution of our population on lines which will create a better balance in our national life between town and country. Such schemes as the Hundred New Towns Plan would greatly facilitate this desirable result, and help to bridge the wide gulf which now exists between rural and urban communities.

Furthermore, if reverence is to be paid to the idea of a true fellowship then it is important to re-create the village community itself. The breaking up of big estates owing to the incidence of large death duties and heavy taxation has not been an unmixed blessing. In not a few instances it has meant a waste of valuable land which has passed into the control of speculating builders. In many places it has been marked by the coming on of a well-to-do urban group, whose main object is week-end recreation, and who have little or no kinship with the life of the local community or concern to maintain its worthy traditions. It is here that the Church can, and should, play an important part in creating a new sense of fellowship, and a real unity of interest and outlook on the part of the village community. The Church of Christ holds the clue and the secret to the threefold reverence, which is the indispensable condition of a new rural life. In her liturgy and worship she can touch the springs of reverence for the earth, which is God's gift to man.

This truth is enshrined in the consecration of the material order implicit in the sacraments, in the water of Baptism, and in the bread and wine of the Holy Eucharist. Reverence for our daily work, in the spirit of the Incarnate Son of God, who toiled as a carpenter, and reverence for true human fellowship, expressed in the Family of God, are facts the Church must emphasise, for she is the real, classless society. The opportunity before the village church was never greater. It calls for a devoted priesthood, knowing and sharing the life of the community to which it ministers. It calls for the Church to promote and protect the just right of the workers in wages, housing and all that pertains to the happiness of their home life, and the worth and dignity of their labour. It calls for a sympathetic and practical understanding of the needs and problems of the farmer, whose value to the whole nation has been proved in the crucial days of war. Our plea is that these reforms and achievements must not be inspired merely by economic expediency, or the pressure of passing necessity. They belong to the attainment of the true unity of life by which, in God, we become linked in a right relationship with God's earth, and with our fellow men who are His children, and in thus doing we find the things which belong to our peace.

The Town Meeting

To the Editor of CROSSROADS:

In the President's Message of the February issue of your magazine there a lot said about the Division of Town and Country being the grown-up child of Rural Workers' Fellowship. That strikes me as being about as accurate as to say that the Christian Church is the parent of the United Nations. It seems to me that the RWF is more like a noisy rooter in the stands claiming credit for belonging to the team which is ahead.

The reason we have such a strong Division of Town and Country is that General Convention, moved by Dad Dennis' earnest appeal, voted a large enough budget to bring into being some of the visions that Cliff Samuelson had been holding up for all to see for some years.

I'm heartily sick of hearing that we must find out what the role of the RWF is. We have been doing that, to my personal knowledge, for at least ten years without success. My conclusion is that it has no role beyond being a club of chummy country characters who love conventions. That's why I resigned.

Sincerely,
Philip Humason Steinmetz

—oOo—

Dear Sir:

I marvel that it does not occur to these isolated rural clergy over whose loneliness so many tears are shed to find fellowship in the Body of Christ surrounding them in their solitary majesty under the name of the Baptist Church, the Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church, the Congregational Churches and similar banners. There are multitudes of ministers and people in these bodies who know and love the Lord and who respond joyfully to overtures of fraternal equality. Of course, they do not care to listen to proud preachments about what we have to give them. But I can testify that loneliness departs when you sit with them before the Bible and read and study together what God is trying to say to our age.

Sincerely,
Charles T. Antheil

—oOo—

Thomas a Kempis said: "For a vain matter and a slight promise men go far not to toil day and night but, alas, for an unchangeable good, they grudge even the least fatigue."

—oOo—

Nicholas Berdyaev says: "Care for the life of another, even material, bodily care, is spiritual in essence. Bread for myself is a material question; bread for my neighbor is a spiritual question."

THE COMPOST HEAP

By JOHN and HELEN PHILBRICK

THE request has been made for specific directions on building a compo heap to provide humus for rectory gardens. Although the conditio vary according to region and, thus, it is sort of telling someone how bring up his family, we will try to make some general directions, whi can be amplified by correspondence if necessary.

Location is the first consideration. The compost needs to be in a place sheltered from sun and drying wind, as compost making is a delicate process of fermentation comparable to the making of fine wine. There should be shade on the south side to prevent the sun from baking the goodness out of the top layers. Trees on the south should be hard woods, not pines because the pine-tar prevents fermentation in the heap. Maple tree roots will come up under the compost and rob it of its goodness. Good trees to have around the compost yard are birch, elderberry, locust and wild cherry.

Tools required are extremely simple: preferably a spade (but a shovel will do), a pitchfork or spading fork, and running water in a hose.

Material to go into the compost heap should include any and all available cuttings of grass, weeds, shrubs, trees, leaves, sods, hay, straw, old flowers, corn cobs and coffee grounds. In fact, anything that once grew out of the earth is grist for your mill, including all kinds of kitchen scraps. Tin and glass obviously would not contribute to garden soil nutrition. A very sma amount of paper — up to 30% you use a bacterial starter — wi add bulk and variety. If any kir of barn dressing is available, it is th best possible material and every e fort should be made to secure Cleanings from a hen-house al provide valuable nitrogen in a for not available elsewhere.

There are two methods of a proach in the actual building. O is to start the heap and build it little every day as kitchen scraps a garden trimmings come along. T other is to collect several piles materials whereever the compost pi is to be located and to build t whole pile in one day. The fi method takes less care and attenti but may suffer more from negl and disinterest. The second meth takes one whole day to build b when the day is ended the heap finished and has only to settle a 'ripen' for three or four mont when it will be ready to use.

The actual process of constructi is about the same whenever the p is built: With the shovel or spad dig an area about four feet by s feet, the depth of the shovel a pile the dug-out soil around t ages. The purpose is not to dig a p but to cut through the top layer sods so that the compost wil be contact with rich earth beneath, f

The Roanridge homesteaders give us valuable information about how to enrich the soil in our family-garden plot. Further information can be obtained by writing them at Roanridge, Rt. 3-Box 371, Parkville, Mo.

his earth acts as a culture to start he processes of fermentation. In the ole, pile a layer of weedy, strawy aterial to provide some air spaces. o not pack it too tight. This layer ould be about six inches deep. ver it spread a layer of barnyard anure, hen house cleanings, or arbage, thinly spread, to a depth f not more than one inch. Next, prinkle over about an inch of the p soil that was dug out of the hole. epeat with about six inches of hay r weeds or brush and a very thin prinkling of agricultural limestone. hen add a very minute sprinking f bacterial starter if you decide to se it.

Layering is of utmost importance ecause all the material should be inly laid on to allow the decomosition to permeate the heap. For nstance, people will say, "Oh, I nly use maple leaves in my compost eaps, . . . but they don't seem to reak down very well." The reason s that tree leaves alone will not dery. They need the admixture of ther materials, grass and weeds and especially soil in thin layers to pread the decomposition bacteria whose purpose is to reduce everyhing to topsoil — so that new life an grow out of it again (meditaion for an Easter sermon.)

The heap should be about four eet high — about as high as you will want to lift the materials with pitch-fork. It should taper slightly oward the top so that the sides and op can be covered with a protective ayer of straw of topsoil to keep the un and wind out. Keep the hose unning while you build and soak ach layer well.

If you layer well with good topsoil, the heap will be ready to use in about a year. If you want it sooner—in 3 to 4 months, use some kind of a bacterial starter: Activo, Actumus or Milorganite — all advertised in current gardening magazines. The Homestead uses bacterial starter from the biochemical laboratory at Threefold Farm, Spring Valley, New York. One dollar's worth is enough for a heap 4 x 6 x 4 and we know that it works as fast as possible, decomposes up to 30% of paper and is safe to use.

A piece of poultry wire can be arranged to keep hens or dogs from pirating the heap. Lime and topsoil sprinkled over garbage will also keep dogs away. As soon as the bacteria gets to work the heap will decompose rapidly and shrink to one-third its original size. Do not allow weeds to grow on the heap as they will devour all its goodness. If they do grow around the edges, save them to put into the next heap to add trace minerals which they have taken from the first heap. When the heap is shrunken, brown, crumbly in texture with a woodsy smell like the soil in the deep woods, it is ready to spread on the garden at a rate of about one pint to two square feet of soil.

All these measurements are relative: If your soil is sandy you will need a thicker layer of earth. If it is clayey, less soil will be adequate. The only way to learn how to build good compost is to go ahead and make it, knowing that next year you will be able to build a better heap. But if you use compost on your gardens, you will gradually become convinced that it costs less and creates better fertility than other methods.

ACROSS THE COPY DESK

Out our way, television aerials are just beginning to compete with Ponderosa pines for the sky-line. The T. V. revolution is underway. But, according to a feature story by Milton R. Bass in the New York *Times*, the counter-revolution is setting in in the rural areas of the east. Writing from Pittsfield, Mass., he says:

"Two local farmers took the bull by the antenna recently and threw their television sets out of the house. Both of them lost a good chunk of money on the deal, but it was a case of a desperate situation requiring desperate measures. They were afraid the farm would fade before the picture tube . . . The lure of video is doubly potent on the farm, where the family is isolated from urban pleasures. Television brought the world and its charms right into the farm parlor. A man could sit there and watch until midnight and that's where the trouble began. Because if a man has to arise at 4:30 a. m. he can't be keeping playboy hours. A farmer needs his eight hours sleep if he is going to keep up his strength, and it's hard to put in a full day of chores on a paltry four or five.

"Most of them did the best they could on scant sleep for a few weeks, but gradually the flesh prevailed, and the hour of awakening became later and later. It reached the point where some agrarians were just getting around to their breakfast coffee at 8 in the morning and the cows were being milked four or five hours past their usual time. The delay in the milking was extremely upsetting to the farmers, because as long as there have been cows there has been the axiom that they must be milked at twelve-hour intervals.

"Just as things looked blackest, the University of Minnesota came out with a report that put some sanity into the crazy business of farming. A survey by the college professors showed that you didn't have to milk your cows at a twelve-hour interval to get the best results. The white-collared white-overalled experts proved you could milk your cows at any reasonable interval and get just as big a yield as you did under the old system, with no damage, physical or mental, to old Bossy.

"The sigh of relief that went up when the county agricultural agent announced this at an association meeting had enough feeling in it to bring tears to the eyes of any television executive. The farmer could once more be the solid backbone of the nation. He could watch television until midnight, get up at bankers' hours, eat a leisurely breakfast, milk the cows at his convenience and have a full yield and a clear conscience at the same time. Animal Husbandry 356, three credits per semester, had lived up to every line in the catalogue.

"But two local farmers decided that enough was enough. 'It reached the point,' said one of the farmers who sold his set,' where the television decided when plowing was going to start around here. And the only time that's going to happen is when they plow me under for the last time. Then they can have sixty sets if they want them. But it will have to be over my dead body.' "

So much for Mr. Bass' report on the counter-revolution in the T. V. field. Next issue this exciting story will be continued when we will have an article by Dana Kennedy, head of the National Council's Division of T. V. and Radio. Will the picture become clearer? Will he refute Mr. Bass? Will Bossy be milked every twelve hours or seriatum? Tune in next issue and see!

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We're having fun as a "poor-man's Gilbert Highet" with a fifteen-minute per week book review program over the Inland Mountain Network in Idaho. It is entitled Bill's Book Shop which a kindly (?) fellow-member of R.W.F. has suggested ought to be Bill's Book Bilge. Anyway, it's good discipline having to write a script each week and, besides, it means that I get all of the new books first at the local library.

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In the final scene of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town,* Emily Webb, a young woman in her grave, asks to relive just one day of her life. The Stage Manager allows her to relive her twelfth birthday, beginning at dawn. It is a lovely day—how lovely she had forgotten—a sunny; snowy anguished, heartbreakingly beautiful day. Each blissfully sad moment is an eternity. She cannot bear the blindness of those she loves. "Let's look at one another," she pleads. But they do not look, nor did she, then. Through her tears, Emily asks the Stage Manager, "Do human beings ever realize life while they live it—every, every minute?" "No," is his answer. "The saints and the poets, maybe—they do some!"

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H. L. Mencken said: "An idealist is one who, on noticing that a rose smells better than a cabbage, concludes that it will also make better soup."

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FILMS ADDED AT ROANRIDGE

Two new motion pictures have been added to the Film Library of Roanridge. These are thirty-minute films in full color which have been produced for the Diocese of Southern Ohio by Alan Shilin.

FOR THE WHOLE CHILD is about the work of the Episcopal Children's Hospital in Cincinnati told through the experiences of one young patient, Jimmy Hacker. Especially good for adult, or even young people's audiences, but probably not a film for family showing, because of the realistic portrayal of the young boy's fears. The camera work on these reminds one of an Alfred Hitchcock suspense sequence.

LIFE ON WHEELS is about the Church's work in the trailer camps of the Scioto Valley in Ohio. The problems of the construction worker who continually 'works himself out of a job' and must move on to another is highlighted, together with the Church's response to his needs in this particular stopping place. Town-Country is involved through the person of Captain William Paddock, C. A., 'sometime member' of the Roanridge staff.

A MIDWEST MISSION

By Raymond L. Holly

THERE IS a point on the state line between Indiana and Illinois, abou a hundred miles south of Chicago, where four dioceses come togethe — the dioceses of Chicago, Springfield, Indianapolis and Northern Indi ana. In administering dioceses, as in cleaning houses, the corners are ap to be neglected. A few years ago, there was a large area here withou an Episcopal Church, although strong parishes surrounded this area.

Iroquois and Ford Counties, Illinois, correspond closely to that par of this area included in the diocese of Chicago. On July 1, 1952, th writer was sent to these two counties. The Church has ministered her before — there was a parish in Onarga from 1856 to 1872, althoug it had a resident priest for only a few months. The most recent regula ministry had been from 1931 to 1937, when the Ven. Winfred Ziegle (later the bishop of Wyoming) and others held monthly services i Watseka and Paxton. Otherwise, the ministry of the Epihcopal Churc had been to the extent that neighboring clergy could find opportuni to work in the area.

Working from information given by neighboring parishes, from the mai ing list of the town-and-country department of the diocese, and the recor of Archdeacon Ziegler's work, Episcopalians were contacted in the are Regular services were started within a few weeks at Onarga (populatio 1455). Watseka, the county seat of Iroquois County (4,235 pop.), an Paxton, the county seat of Ford County (3,795 pop.), were soon give monthly services. Eventually, through the use of lay readers, it b came possible to have a morning service in each of these three co munities.

In November of 1952, the work was designated as an unorganize mission under the name of St. Faith's, and just before the end of th year, on December 29th, it was organized, with 21 communicants. I the end of 1954 it had 35 communicants.

Cottage meetings were the mainstay at the beginning, especially du ing the diaconate of the pastor. At Onarga, the parishioners soon foun that they could use the Cemetery Chapel, which had been used b seldom since it was built in 1914. In Watseka, after meeting in hous for a while, a public hall was rented on Sundays, until in December of 1954, the diocese bought a house. The priest-in-charge of the Missio was given quarters upstairs, and the first floor was made into a worsh center — St. Paulinus' Chapel of St. Faith's Mission. Also, during th fall of 1954, a five year lease on a former rural school near Paxton wa secured. The people there set to work to prepare this as St. Alfred' Chapel of St. Faith's Mission.

The town-and-country department provided, as a memorial to Miss

The Rev. Ray Holly, one of the recipients of the R.W.F. award in 1954, gives us a picture of the work that he has been doing in the town-country area of Chicago. Fr Holly starts us off on a series of significant town-and-country works around the nation—any suggestions?

Carolina Larrabee, for many years active in its work, a portable altar for use in the rural work of the diocese of Chicago. Until buildings were secured at all three stations, the use of this chaplain's kit was essential.

The day that the missionary was ordained priest, November 29, 1952, he presented the first candidate for confirmation of St. Faith's Mission — an adult — born in the area, and whose family had lived in the vicinity for many years. This is an indication that the prejudice initially found against the Episcopal Church may be breaking down — an inference borne out by its acceptance in the three communities.

The prejudice that exists against the Episcopal Church in the Midwest (probably the reason for much of its difficulty in that region) is largely the association with England. This part of the United States was settled at first by Revolutionary War veterans. The distrust of England which they felt is found today. In the popular mind, the Episcopal Church is the same as the Church of England, and the Church of England is that sinister body which persecuted the Puritans, who left England so they could worship God according to the dictates of their conscience. The prejudices fostered by this version of history can be met only by the continued witness of the Church in this area — and it is being so met.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Lord's Acre Movement

By E. DARGAN BUTT

"I BELIEVE that no country church can afford to be without the Lord's Acre plan." These are the words of the Rev. Dumont Clarke, writing in the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Lord's Acre edition of the Farmers' Federation News. This magazine is published by the Farmers' Federation, a cooperative centered in Asheville and working throughout Western North Carolina.

This cooperative is somewhat unique in that it has a Religious Department. It seems that the leaders of the Federation have realized the necessity for the development and maintenance of spiritual values as well as of material prosperity, if the farmers of that area are really to be successful and happy.

One of the practical issues of the Religious Department has been the sponsoring of the Lord's Acre method of rural church financing. In 1930, the Federation chose as head of this department the Rev. Mr. Clarke, whom we have referred to above. Mr. Clarke, a minister of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., has been the leader and chief inspiration of the movement ever since. Today, as the Federation celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Lord's Acre Movement, it can look back on the

achievements of this work over a quarter of a century with great cause for satisfaction and thanksgiving.

There is nothing new in the Lord's Acre method. It is about as old as the Church. In Exodus we read: "The first of the first fruits of thy land shalt thou bring unto the house of the Lord thy God." (Exodus 34:26) For some reasons, however, in modern days of money exchange in America, the practice of dedicating in kind the fruits of the field and the handiwork of the farm family fell into disuse. It has been the Farmers' Federation and the Rev. Dumont Clarke who, perhaps more than any others, have been responsible for bringing the Church back to a consciousness of the values, both spiritual and practical, of this method. The Church, too, has responded. Not only in Western North Carolina, but from every state in the union, and from many foreign lands, inquiries have come, projects have been started, and successes have been recorded.

The Lord's Acre method has many values. It's purpose is, primarily, a very practical one, a realistic method of rural church financing. It offers the farmer and his family the opportunity to dedicate to God and the Church something that is at hand, something that is a part of their vocation. While many who have used it feel that it should not completely take the place of weekly money offerings, but should be dedicated to some special purpose, it does furnish a means of resource far beyond the expectations of many who have begun its use.

It has other values than money raising, however. Perhaps its greatest value is a by-product of its primary purpose, and lies in the fact that the Lord's Acre method does much to incarnate the life of the Church into the daily life of the farmer. The parson talks about spiritual life and the farmer slops hogs. In a tragically large number of instances there seems, in the minds of the farmers and, yes, in the minds of many parsons, no vital connection between the two. When a farmer, however, slops his hogs in order to promote the spiritual values with which his Church challenges him, the union is made, and week day work and Sunday religion are seen as one and the same thing. In these days of growing materialism in rural life; as farming becomes more a business enterprise rather than a way of life; it may be that the Lord's Acre work will do much to save rural people from a fatal dualism between the sacred and the secular, and preserve the sacramental attitude towards life in its entirety.

The Lord's Acre, again, offers a wonderful point of contact in pastoral relations. When a pastoral call is being made, a wonderful rapport can be achieved by simply asking: "How is your Lord's Acre project getting along?" This is usually followed by an immediate invitation to come and see for yourself. The minister goes with the farmer to the field or barn, with the housewife to the sewing room or kitchen. There, with mingled pride and satisfaction, parson and layman feel their mutual dedication to the work of the Church, and an increased fellowship in this working relationship. The children, too, are thrilled when they can show the parson their

Lord's Acre chicken, or other project. It helps them feel that they have a mature place in the Church, and a real relationship with their pastor. As one child proudly announced: "I am raising a pig for my heavenly Father!"

The Lord's Acre has powers of Evangelism. People have to be contacted where they are. In a good many cases the first vital contact with the Church has been through the solicitation of their help in a Lord's Acre project. This work they understand; where they feel at home. There they learn what Christian Fellowship is. Many a person, starting in the Church garden has been found eventually at the altar rail.

In developing the Lord's Acre work, the Farmers' Federation was both wise and fortunate in the selection of the man they chose to lead the movement. Mr. Clarke is a man of deep spiritual insight and personal consecration. He has given himself untiringly to the work. We can all feel ourselves fortunate that the man selected to lead this movement is not primarily a promoter but a man of God.

Episcopalians have increasingly taken up the Lord's Acre Work in their rural ministries. To list a few who have had Lord's Acre projects, we can mention the following: the Rev. A. Raymond Smith, Fort Fairfield, Me.; the Rev. G. Donald Swinton, Shelbyville, Mich.; the Rev. W. Shelby Walthall, Jessups, Md., the Rev. Wm. B. Spofford, Jr., Weiser, Idaho; the Rev. Wilbur C. Leach, Valle Crucis, N. C.; the Rev. Francis B. Rhein, Millwood, Va.; the Rev. Frank D. Dwian, Maryville, Mo.; Captain Thomas C. Wheat, C. A. Valle Crucis, N. C.; and Capt. Robert Jones, C. A., Hillman and Long Rapids, Mich.

The Farmers' Federation has excellent literature on the subject of the Lord's Acre. For those who are interested, send for a copy of the 25th Anniversary Edition of the Federation News, and a list of other publications, to The Farmers' Federation, Asheville, N. C.

The Consultation Corner

Dear Sir:

I am now planning to become a woman worker in the Church and, at this point, I am interested in finding out what the opportunities are in the town-and-country field for a female worker. By this, I mean, not just what a full job might entail, but what some of the problems might be for a woman worker in the town-and-country field.

I know that, within the R.W.F., there are some female members who have spent some time in town-and-country work full-time and believe that it might be helpful if they could give me some impression of their feelings, attitudes, and so forth.

Sincerely yours,
Clara F. Ication

An ex-Town-Country Worker Replies

The position of a Christian education worker in the town and country field depends upon the conditions which already exist within the diocese or area where she may be working. Frequently, a woman worker is employed in a town and country diocese or district as a Christian education executive for that field. In other places, she may be working in a county or a larger area, and sometimes she may be a member of a team which ministers to a group of parishes and missions.

Perhaps the greatest ministry is to isolated rural families. The Church School-by-Mail has reached these families throughout the country for many years. However, it is highly probable that there needs to be a careful evaluation of the Church-School-by-Mail program.

How can we, as Christian educators, help a family to become a truly redemptive group? How can a family come to understand that their chief concerns about each other should be in terms of their relationships to Almighty God? How do mothers and fathers in isolated areas come to understand that perhaps theirs is the only ministry of the Church which is real to their children?

It is my belief that only when families are able to face these problems, knowing they are unable to reveal God's love in any complete way, that family prayer and studying together can be of any real purpose. Meaningful family prayer and helpful study are fruits of real 'living together.'

This aspect of working with rural and isolated families is probably the greatest unexplored field within the work of the town and country Church. Little thought has gone into this whole problem. Few, if any, practical techniques have been worked out, and families seek the help of those who are willing to think about this particular aspect of town and country Christian education, other areas of the work seem to fall into the thinking-through of these other problems.

Any woman worker in a town and country district or diocese will find herself working closely with the educational program in small parishes and missions. Should she feel that her work is primarily with children, she will soon discover that without regular contact with parents and other adults in the congregation, she is unable to reach the children.

Somehow we have to help our parents and teachers see that the faith and practice of the Episcopal Church has something to do with their lives at this moment, in order that they may help their children see the same thing. Programs which accomplish this are already underway in missions all over our land. It may be that the task of the woman worker is only to help these adult groups as they seek to find the truth.

As jobs are set up for women in our Church at the present time, any woman in the town and country field is bound to discover that she must fill many executive needs. Diocesan conferences and vacation church schools

ll a very real need in the lives of rural young people and adults. No iocese will want to plan for these activities without the help of the woman orker, and no woman worker will want these programs to be planned ithout some understanding of what she is trying to do in relationship to ese people.

The writer of this letter asks for impressions of our feelings and attitudes. ne needs to know that in many areas the professional loneliness which the oman worker faces often appears insurmountable. In many dioceses there no one who shares her deep concern for Christian education. She misses e companionship of someone who will 'talk shop' for hours on end. On e other hand, there is much strength which comes from the love and e friendship of the people with whom she works.

I have been away from town and country work for two years now, yet uring the Christmas season I have felt very close to many of the town and untry people in my former diocese. In their Christmas letters they have ared with me ideas about how to care for raspberries, problems in conection with their Church schools, and many of their family joys and sorws. Any loneliness which one feels professionally certainly is nothing in mparison to the strength which comes from this kind of care and love.

Working in the town and country field is hard work, but any job is if ne tries to do it well. The joys are great and so are the sorrows. There is great need for creative thought in many areas and the woman who ends up oing it will indeed find manifold blessings.

. . . Margaret McBride, Department
of Christian Education, Greenwhich, Conn.

YOU ARE THERE!

WENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

From the Rural Messenger; May, 1930.)

Division for Rural Work Issues Prayer Leaflet."

"Prayers for Rural Life," a small leaflet, has just been issued by the ivision for Rural Work at National Council.

The leaflet contains a Litany for the Church's Work in the Rural eld; some appropriate hymns; and the following prayers: Vision and eal in Rural Work; Those Who Serve in Rural Areas; The Isolated; ne Seed that Shall Be Sown; The Harvests of the World; Community d Farm Organizations; Rural Schools and Conferences; Rural Social rvice; Beasts and Cattle; The Children of the Countryside, etc.

(Ed. This is a good, usable leaflet, and might well be revised and printed.)

WENTY YEARS AGO.

From the Rural Messenger; April, 1935.)

nnouncement of new book on the Town and Country Church.

"The Episcopal Church in Town and Country," by the Rev. (now Bishop) odrich R. Fenner, has just been published and offered to the Church.

This is an exceedlingly fine book, with much good material for the ral parson and congregation, and for the study of the Church in general.

This book was published by National Council.

Regional Conference at Auburn, Alabama.

(From the Rural Messenger; April, 1935)

Announcement was made of the Regional Rural Church Conference, be held June 11-21, at Alabama Politechnic Institute, Auburn, Ala.

The leaders: Bishop Mercer Green, of Mississippi; Dr. Roy J. Colbert; t Rev. G. H. Harris, of South Carolina, who will give the lead in Communi Organization in Relation to Religious Life; the Rev. James S. Butler, wh will give the lead on Promotion of Religious Leadership; the Rev. or V H. Sessions, of Mississippi, who will give the lead on Studies of Metho of Church Extension; and Mrs. Wm. Lamb and Mrs. B. J. Baldwin, leade of the Women's Groups.

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO.

(From the Rural Messenger, April 1940)

The Wayside Cathedral of the Diocese of Southern Ohio.

This article shows a picture and gives a description of St. Paul's Wa side Cathedral, a mobile church edifice, with Bishop Hobson standing a provingly by.

The Wayside Cathedral is mounted on a truck trailer, pulled by a sto car. It travels through the bounds of the Diocese, holding services whe there is no church building.

Its features include a reversible altar, for use at either indoor or outdo services; a Hammond Organ; a P. A. system; movie projector; and se inside for thirty persons.

At this date the Cathedral had travelled 55,000 miles.

FIVE YEARS AGO.

(From Crossroads, May, 1950)

Four receive the Rural Workers Fellowship Award.

The Annual Rural Fellowship Award was given this year to four cler The Rt. Rev. Malcom E. Peabody, of Central New York; The Rev. Willi Christian, of Fond du Lac; Canon Ernest B. Smith, of Olympia; and t Rev. Richard R. Price, of Montana.

Motes and Beams

Our preacher gave a powerful sermon
That should make the wicked slow;
Every point he made applied to
Several people that I know.

The fisher of men in a modern country parish is not one who casts net into the sea and gathers in every kind. He is more like a dry-fly man an over-fished river; the fish are sophisticated and he must watch fo 'rise'; sermons may be tired like flies; they may or may not attract, but t striking and landing are done by interviews.

. . . A. W. Hopkinson: Pastor's Progress

—oOo—

St. Francis de Sales said: "The test of a preacher is that his congregati goes away saying, not 'What a lovely sermon' but 'I will do something!'.

—oOo—

Brief description of a great man: "When I met him, I was looking dow when I left him, I was looking up."